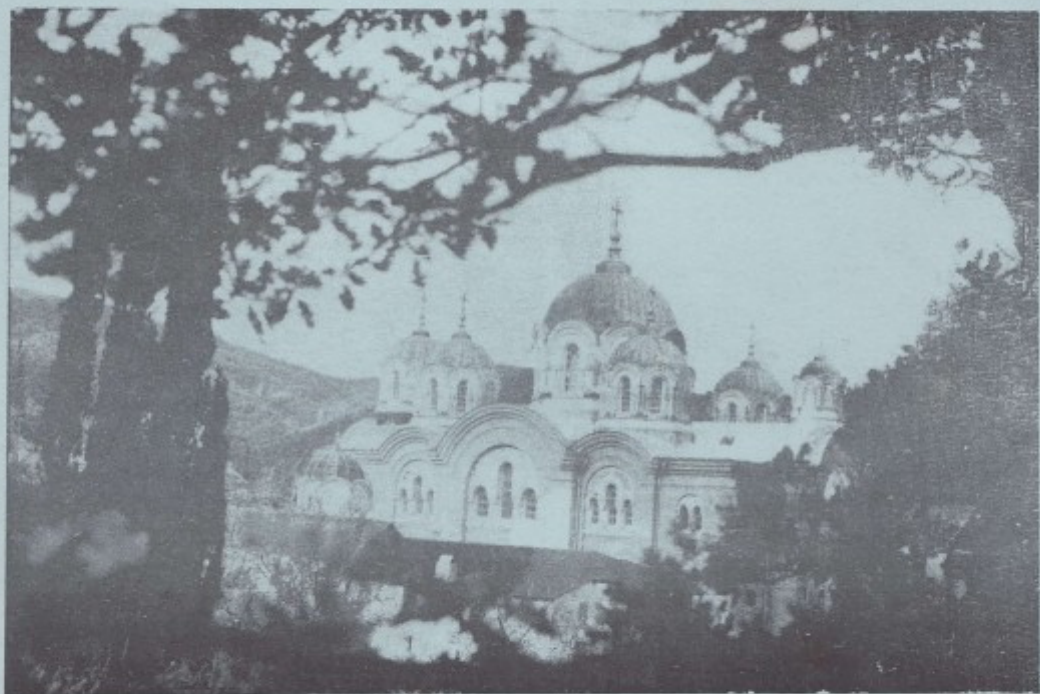


LIVING ORTHODOXY



VOLUME IV, No. 4; July-August 1982



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COVER PHOTO: Skete of the Prophet Elias, Mount Athos; photo by Fr. John Milander, formerly of Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville.

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WHY DO ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS USE THAT FUNNY CALENDAR?

The Nativity of Our Lord on the 7th of January?! Pascha a week or two or more after the Easter bunny has finished his rounds? Yes...but not exactly. From the beginning of Christian history, there have been two components to the Church calendar, and it is important to understand their relationship, if we are to understand the 'calendar problem'.

The two components are related, and are both dependent upon a revision of the calendar which was imposed upon the people of western Europe in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII of Rome (but not accepted in Great Britain and the North American colonies until 1752). Prior to that time, the entire 'civilized' world had used the same calendar---the 'Julian' calendar---for both religious and civil purposes. But the astronomical scientists of that new humanist era convinced Pope Gregory that the old calendar was in error---that it did not properly match astronomical events---and should therefore be changed.



In our 'modern' world, we may take it for granted that this was a perfectly reasonable action to take. But we would do well to pause a moment and ask ourselves with what sort of celebrations the Church is really concerned. The Church has never celebrated the solar solstices or the equinoxes...and it was to coincide 'properly' with these that the calendar was readjusted at that time...creating what is now known as the 'Gregorian calendar'---the calendar in common civil use, and the only calendar known now to Roman Catholics and Protestants.

However, this 'new' calendar was repeatedly condemned by Orthodox councils and synods in the centuries following its adoption (and, as previously noted, long resisted by non-Roman portions of the western world ---of which echos exist even into our own day, as there are still people living in Appalachia who can remember the celebrations in their grandparents' days of 'old Christmas'...on the Orthodox date!). These condemnations did not come about solely as a result of antiquarian interest, or a hide-bound 'traditionalism'.

Rather, they arose out of two well-founded concerns. First---that the motive for the 'correction' had nothing whatever to do with Christian worship (and the calendar is, for Christians, first and foremost, a component of the liturgical life of the Church). And second---that the adjustment corrupted the decree of the ecumenical First Council of Nicaea concerning the determination of the date of Pascha.

The date of Pascha, which was a source of considerable difficulty in the early days of the Church (for the methods for determining it varied from place to place in the Church), was one of the serious questions undertaken by the Council...for the entire Church felt that it was undesirable for such a feast to be celebrated at different times in different places. The conclusion of the Council was that the Feast should be kept in relationship to the Jewish Passover feast (rather than on an absolute calendar-date...following which it would fall on a different day of the week each year). An appropriate formula for its determination was adopted, such that Pascha would always follow closely after Passover (and the Council stipulated that that should be the result). And so the matter rested for many centuries.

But when the Nicean formula is applied to the Gregorian calendar (which in the twentieth century is 13 days in advance of the Church calendar), the result is that the proposed date for 'Easter' most often falls during, or even before, Passover...in contradiction to the decree of the Council. And so it is that, most often, Orthodox Pascha comes a week or more after the non-Orthodox world has celebrated the Resurrection Feast. With the exception of the Finnish 'Orthodox' Church, nowhere has any Orthodox body accepted this anticanonical date for Pascha.... but there are indications that some so-called Orthodox jurisdictions may have such an action in mind.

All this might be but a footnote to schismatic sectarian history, of little interest to Orthodox Christians---had not a large number of na-

tional 'Orthodox' Churches within the past few decades undertaken to join the 'modern' world by adopting the papal (Gregorian) calendar for all purposes except the determination of the date of Pascha. And this brings us to the other component of the 'calendar problem'---the cycle of festivals of the saints and other feasts which are celebrated on fixed dates (rather than being dependent upon the variable date of Pascha).

Consequently, we now face the spectacle of local churches within close proximity to one another, all calling themselves Orthodox, which celebrate the feast of Our Lord's Nativity thirteen days apart (as well as all the other 364 feast-days of the Church year)...while one Church is celebrating the Nativity, another is still in the midst of the Fast in preparation for that feast. This is bad enough in itself...but the effects of this peculiar situation go even farther---for the sanctoral and paschal cycles of the Church calendar are inter-related. For those who presume to use a 'new' calendar, in some years the Apostles' Fast (which begins according to the paschal cycle, but ends according to the sanctoral cycle) disappears altogether.

All such problems aside, there yet remains the question of the motivation for any change to the 'new calendar'. Either such a change must be made because one has accepted the argument that solar accuracy of the calendar is of paramount importance...or because one has come to the conclusion that synchronization of calendars with the Pope, the Protestant denominations, and the business world is of greater importance than maintaining liturgical unity with true Orthodox Christians throughout the world and throughout history. Further, as we have already noted, such a change is in defiance of numerous Orthodox councils throughout the past five centuries.

Thus it is that true Orthodox Christians throughout the world continue to use the historic Church calendar...walking through time to the 'beat of a different drummer' from that which guides the business world, sectarian churches, and would-be 'modern Orthodox' Christians. We do indeed celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord on the 25th of December, as the Church has for centuries...but if we are to mark that date on a civil calendar, must turn to the page for the 7th of January of the following year to do so. A bit of a nuisance sometimes...but the nuisance arises from the apostasy of the modern world (of which the calendrical problem is only an extrusive symptom---the rot is deeper within), not from any 'antiquarianism' on the part of true Orthodoxy.

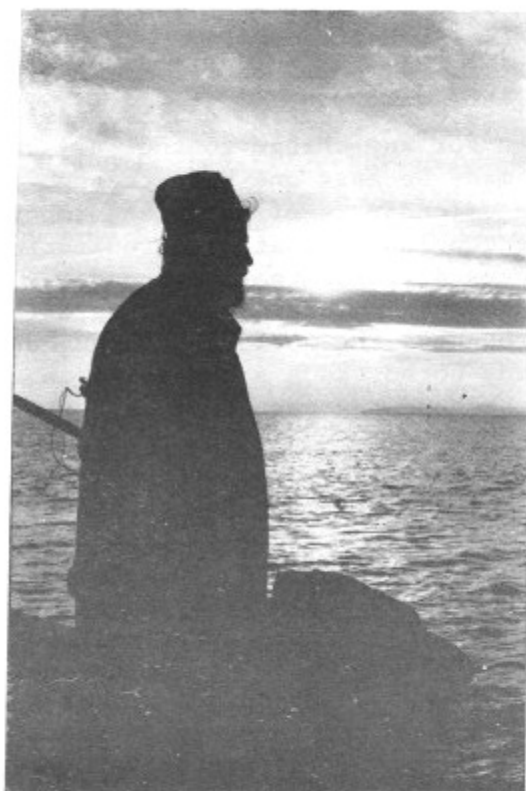
Given this apostasy, the disjunction in calendars actually has a positive 'fringe benefit' for true Orthodox Christians. Sadly, what the world, for the most part, celebrates as 'Christmas' on the 25th of December bears little relationship to what true Orthodox Christians celebrate as the Nativity of Our Lord on that other 25th of December thirteen days later. And what it celebrates as 'Easter' bears equally little relationship to Orthodox Pascha. The same could be said of the many other feasts....but for the most part they are ignored by a modern world too preoccupied with the business at hand to take much notice of the commemorations of the martyrs and the full celebration of the redemptive events of the life of Our Lord. So it is actually somewhat of a relief to live in a 'calendar ghetto'...and to be more easily able to tell the sheep from the goats.

A MODERN PILGRIMAGE TO MOUNT ATHOS

A Photo-essay by Konstantine Molchanov

In the winter of 1981, I made my second pilgrimage to the Holy Mountain of Athos. The thing which struck me most was how little it had changed since my first visit, and the feeling that it hadn't changed for centuries. As rapid change is characteristic of our modern world, it is incredible that an institution so old could survive relatively intact.

For those who have never heard of it, Athos is a peninsula in the north of Greece, which is like a separate kingdom of monasteries. No women or female animals are allowed there, and the monks live a way of life unchanged for centuries. Mount Athos itself is a mountain which dominates this small kingdom. Monks and pilgrims climb to the top to celebrate the Feast of the Transfig-



uration of Our Lord. A friend of mine who visited Athos in the 1960's said that at that time it could have been characterized as a dying institution. Happily, it is quietly beginning to show new signs of life. A new generation of monks is appearing. Some of the monasteries have young, highly educated priests and abbots. European monks, converts to Orthodoxy, are scattered about the Holy Mountain.

Mount Athos is unique among all places of pilgrimage in that it is under the special protection of the Mother of God. As des-



cribed in the history of Athos: "According to one tradition, the Virgin Mary, accompanied by St. John the Evangelist, was on her way to visit Lazarus in Cyprus, when a sudden storm arose, and her ship was carried to Athos. They are said to have come ashore close to the present Iveron Monastery. There, the Holy Virgin rested for a while and, overwhelmed by the beauty of the place, she asked her Son to give her the mountain, despite the fact that the inhabitants were pagans. In response, a voice was heard, saying: 'Let this place be your inheritance and your garden, a paradise and a haven of salvation for those seeking to be

saved.' Thus the Holy Mountain was consecrated as the inheritance and the garden of the Mother of God."

Mount Athos is laden with spiritual, material and historical treasures. The land itself ranges from lush forests to nearly desertlike cliffs. The monasteries are like little walled medieval cities, with narrow, winding streets. They are generally surrounded by gardens and orange



groves, which overlook the ocean. Particularly stunning are the churches. Somber and mystical, they are illuminated only by candles, and contain ancient icons in iconostases of gold. Many of the walls are covered with frescoes. Each church contains many relics, put out for veneration on long tables, of the most famous saints of Orthodoxy. The services are conducted according to the ancient Athonite typicon. On the eve of a major feast, the vigil may start at seven at night,

and not end until nine the next morning---giving you the feeling of Pascha in January or August.

Athonite monks live a number of different ways. Some live in monasteries, which may contain 30-50 monks. Others live in kellia or sketes, smaller houses with 6-10 monks living under an elder. The most austere way of life is led by the hermits, most of whom live in Karoullia, on the southernmost tip of the peninsula. Here, members of the Russian Imperial Court lived close to simple peasants. The dwellings of



the ancient hermits can still be seen, and they are shocking in their austerity. Small caves, they are no more than ten to fifteen feet long. The monks slept directly on the stone floors, their only possessions being a few books. The only way to reach these caves is by climbing a chain, which is suspended down the side of a cliff rising nearly vertically from the ocean. The sun beats directly on the rocks, making a desertlike climate. It was particularly interesting one

day to see a collection being taken up for the Orthodox Mission in Uganda---especially touching to see these hermits, some giving their last few drachma in support of this new center of Orthodoxy. Nowadays Russian, Serbian, Greek and Dutch monks live here close to each other.

Athonite monks support themselves by a variety of crafts, such as icon painting, the restoration of ancient books, and the making of incense---the secrets of which are jealously guarded and passed down from generation to generation. Each monastery and kellia has a long history, giving one a unique feeling of being in a different world, immersed in timelessness.

Athos cannot long survive in its present form. Already, threats are being made to its spiritual and physical survival. Indifference is the most powerful weapon of the Enemy. Pilgrims---visit, while there is time, this 'paradise and haven of salvation for those seeking to be saved.'



THE SUFFERING OF THE HOLY MARTYRS ADRIAN AND NATALIA
(Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 26th of August)



The impious Emperor Maximian, a great persecutor of the Church of Christ, arrived in the city of Nicomedia, having tortured and slain a multitude of Christians wherever he had gone. Entering into a pagan temple, the emperor bowed down in worship before his abominable gods, falling down to the ground before the idols. While all the inhabitants of that city

took part, he offered up his vile sacrifices. Thereafter, he commanded that the Christians be sought out and handed over to be tortured. The emperor threatened with particular torments those who might have considered concealing the Christians; but he promised rewards and honors to those who, knowing where Christians were hiding, would inform on them or, finding them, would themselves bring them to judgement. Thus, neighbor began to betray neighbor, friend betrayed friend --- some out of fear of the provisions of the emperor's dread edict, others for reward.

Certain of the impious informed their military commander that there were Christians hiding in a cave, chanting there all night long, and praying to their God. Straightway, soldiers were dispatched thither, and they arrived at the cave and laid hold of all the Christians who were therein, to the number of twenty-three. Securing them with iron chains, they led them back to the city to be brought before the emperor.

At that time the emperor was riding in his chariot to a pagan temple, there to offer sacrifice. Encountering him on the way, the soldiers who were leading the fettered Christians cried out to him: "O Emperor, behold them that flout thine edict, the blasphemers of our great gods!" Ordering his chariot to halt, and ordering those prisoners to approach nearer to him, the emperor asked them whence they had come. "We are natives of this land, but are Christians by Faith." "Can it be that ye have not heard what manner of torments await them that call themselves Christians?" continued the emperor. "We have heard," answered the saints, "and have laughed at thy foolishness and at Satan himself who worketh through his children who do not believe in God, whose leader thou art!" Enraged, the emperor cried out: "Ye wretches! How dare ye call me a fool and laugh at me? I vow by the great gods that I will break in pieces your bodies amid the cruelest of tortures!" And he commanded his soldiers, saying: "Stretch them out and beat them without mercy with staves, and then we shall see whether their God cometh to help them, and free them from my hands!" And the martyrs were savagely beaten by the soldiers, but while they were undergoing this torment, they said to the emperor: "O enemy of God, set over us yet another three torturers; however many thou dost summon, whatever torments thou devisest, know thou that thereby thou dost but increase the number of our crowns!" "O ye most wretched of men," cried the emperor, "I shall have your heads removed, and on what then shall ye place your crowns? Renounce your vain faith and bring not destruction upon yourselves for your foolishness!" But the martyrs replied: "God will destroy thee because without cause thou dost torment His servants, who have wrought no evil!"

Then the emperor ordered his soldiers, saying: "Strike them with stones about the mouth!" And straightway taking up stones in their hands, his servants began to smite the martyrs about the mouth, but they did not so much harm to them as to themselves, for they went insane, and with those self-same stones broke each others' jaws.

And the saints said to the tyrant Maximian: "O iniquitous hater of God, without mercy thou dost beat us who are in no wise guilty before thee, but an angel of God shall slay thee and shall destroy all thine impious household. Thou canst not sate thyself on the torments wherewith thou dost torture us in the course of so many hours and with such brutality; yet incomparably greater torments await thee thyself. Apparently thou hast not given thought that we have the same body as thou hast, with the sole difference that thine is befouled and impure, whereas ours is cleansed and sanctified by Holy Baptism."

Angered all the more by such words, the tyrant Maximian cried out: "I swear by the great gods that I shall give the command for your tongues to be cut out, that others, seeing you, might learn not to contradict their masters!" But the martyrs of Christ replied: "Take heed, O impious tyrant! If thou despisest and tormentest those servants who oppose their earthly masters, then why wouldst thou compel us to oppose the Lord our God? Or wouldst thou that those torments which are prepared for thee should befall us as well?" "Tell me," said Maximian, "what torments are prepared for me?" "That which God hath prepared for the devil and his angels," the saints replied, "He hath also prepared for you, the vessels of the devil---namely: the fire which cannot be quenched, the worm which cannot be satisfied, unceasing torment, everlasting punishment, the damnation of hell, the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and many other tortures innumerable."

"I swear, I will have your tongues cut out!" cried the tyrant. "Thou fool," replied the saints, "if thou cuttest out those organs wherewith we glorify God, our breath shall all the more easily reach Him and our hearts shall cry out to Him with yet greater force, and our blood shed by thee shall like a clarion raise its voice to the Master, proclaiming that we are suffering in innocence."

Hearing the saints reply thus, the impious emperor commanded that they be put in iron chains and cast into prison, and that their names and statements be recorded in the minutes of the court.

When they led the saints to the palace of the tribunal to record their names, one of the officers thereof, a man of exalted station by the name of Adrian, an adherent of the Hellenic impiety, having witnessed the steadfast and courageous suffering of those martyrs, approached them and asked: "I

adjure you by your God, for Whose sake ye have suffered so: tell me in good conscience, what awaiteth you from your God for such torment? I think that ye hope to receive from Him something great and wondrous." The holy martyrs answered him, saying: "We cannot with our own lips describe to thee, nor canst thou grasp with thy hearing, nor attain with thy mind unto those joys and most glorious honors which we expect to receive from our Master, the righteous Bestower of rewards." "Then is nought known to thee thereof from the books of the Law, the prophets and others?" "Even the prophets themselves," replied the saints, "could not perfectly attain in mind to those everlasting blessings, in that they were men as we are; although they pleased God with good faith and good works and spake that which the Holy Spirit instilled in them; yet, concerning that glory and recompense which we hope to receive, it saith in the Holy Scriptures: 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him' (1 Cor. 2:9). And hearing these words, Adrian walked out to the middle and said to the scribes who were recording the names of the martyrs: "Write down my name also together with those of these holy men, for I too am a Christian and shall die for Christ God in their company!" And straightway the scribes sent to the emperor informing him that Adrian had declared himself to be a Christian and was asking them to inscribe his name among those of the condemned.

On hearing this, the emperor marvelled and was filled with rage; and, summoning Adrian into his presence, he asked him: "Hast thou taken leave of thy senses, O Adrian? Or dost thou also desire a wicked end?" "Nay, I have not taken leave of my senses," he replied. "But, on the contrary, I have left great insanity behind me and am come to health of mind." "Do not argue," cried the emperor. "It would be better to ask forgiveness, to acknowledge before all that thou hast sinned, and to cross thy name from the list of the condemned." "Henceforth," replied Adrian, "I shall entreat the true God, that He forgive me the sins I committed as a pagan." Enraged all the more by Adrian's words, the emperor Maximian then commanded that he be weighed down with iron chains and cast into prison with the other martyrs, appointing the day wheron he would give them all over to torture.

One of Adrian's slaves, hastening to his home with all possible speed, informed his mistress Natalia, Adrian's wife, that they had put his master in fetters and taken him to prison. Hearing this, Natalia was struck with a great fear. Weeping bitterly and rending her garments, she asked the slave: "For what crime have they imprisoned my husband?" The servant answered: "When he witnessed how certain people were tortured for

the name of someone called Christ, and that they refused to obey the emperor's edict, or to renounce their faith and offer sacrifice to the gods, our master asked the scribes to enter his name among those of the condemned, for he desireth to die with them." "Art thou certain that thou knowest why they were torturing those men?" Natalia again asked the servant. "I have told thee," he answered, "that they were being tortured because of someone named Christ, and because they would not obey the emperor's command to worship the gods."

Then Natalia rejoiced greatly in spirit and ceased to weep; she cast off her torn garments and, arraying herself in her very best, made her way to the prison. The daughter of saintly parents who believed in God, Natalia had always been afraid to reveal her faith in Christ to anyone; she had kept it secret, for she saw the cruel persecutions and torture to which the Christians were subjected by the impious. But now, hearing that her husband believed in Christ and had had his name entered with those who were condemned to torment, she too resolved firmly to declare herself to be a Christian.

Entering the prison, the blessed Natalia fell at her husband's feet and, kissing his fetters, said: "Blessed art thou, O Adrian my lord, for thou hast found a treasure which thou didst not inherit from thy parents, for thus is a man blessed who feareth God. Truly, my lord, at such a young age thou hast by thy faith in Christ acquired such riches as thou wouldst not have attained even in old age, hadst thou remained in the Hellenic error. Now thou shalt depart to everlasting life and shalt find a treasure such as they will not receive who attain great wealth for themselves and acquire estates. There, they will have no time to acquire anything, to lend or to borrow anything from anyone, when none can be delivered from eternal death in hell and from the torments of Gehenna; there, none shall help another---neither a father his son, nor a mother her daughter, nor shall great earthly wealth aid him that hath gathered it, nor shall a slave help his master, but each will have to endure his own punishment. But all of thy virtues, my lord, shall accompany thee to Christ to obtain for thee from Him that blessedness prepared for them that love Him. Go forth to Him with boldness, without fear of the punishment which is to come; for, lo! thou hast already vanquished the unquenchable flame and the rest of the torments! I beseech thee, my lord, to remain steadfast in the calling to which thou hast been summoned by God's lovingkindness. Let thyself be turned from thy good path neither by pity for the beauty of thy youth, nor by love for thy kinfolk, or friends, or servants, or handmaidens, or ought that is of earth, for all proceedeth to age and decay; but keep before thine eyes one thing alone---that which is eternal; and cast not thy gaze towards

the corruptible and transient goods of this world. Be not swayed by the deceptive discourse of thy kinsfolk and friends, lest they dissuade thee from the Faith by their wicked counsel. Despising their blandishments, reject their counsels and pay no heed to their delusive words; direct thine eyes only at those holy martyrs who are with thee; heed their words and emulate their patience without wavering. Fear not the ire of the tyrant and his divers torments, for they shall all quickly come to an end, but there shall be an everlasting reward from Christ in Heaven for His servants who suffer for Him."

And having said this, Natalia fell silent. Then Adrian said to her: "Get thee home now, my sister, and sleep in peace; and when I learn the hour at which they shall lead us forth to torture, I shall inform thee, that thou mightest come and behold our end." And, arising from Adrian's feet, Natalia went to each of the twenty-three prisoners. Falling down before them, she kissed their fetters, saying: "Servants of Christ, I entreat you: watch over this lamb of Christ; advise him to endure unto the end, pointing out to him the future recompense made ready for them that offer their blood to Christ God, like unto you who have offered your own blood, for which suffering ye shall receive eternal salvation as a reward. Join his soul to your souls, and be ye his fathers in place of his parents according to the flesh, who were impious; strengthen him with your holy counsel, that, possessed of unwavering belief, he might complete the course of his suffering."

Thus saying, Natalia turned again to Adrian, who was imprisoned in the deepest dungeon: "Mind thee, my lord," she said, "take no pity on thy youth and comeliness of body: thy body of clay will be food for the worms. Take no heed of thy possessions, of gold or silver, for none of this shall avail thee at the dread Judgement. There, none shall be able to redeem his soul from everlasting damnation by any gifts, for no one will accept the gifts; God will accept the good works of holy souls alone, instead of gifts."

When several days had passed, Adrian, hearing that the emperor wished to bring him and the other prisoners to trial and torment, addressed the holy martyrs with the following request: "Sirs," he said, "with your blessing I must needs depart to my home and summon your handmaid, my sister Natalia, that she might behold our suffering, for I have promised to call her when the hour appointed therefor arriveth." The saints gave him their blessing and vouched for him, and Adrian, bribing the prison guards, went his way.

One of the citizens of the city, seeing him on his way home, hastened to Natalia with all dispatch and informed her that her husband was freed of his chains and even then was approaching his home. Hearing of this, Natalia did not believe it and said: "Who could have freed him? It is not pos-

sible that my husband hath separated himself from the holy martyrs!" During this conversation, however, one of her servants came and said: "Dost thou know, my lady, that our master is freed, and draweth nigh unto our house?" Thinking that he had renounced Christ to gain his freedom, Natalia was greatly troubled and lamented bitterly. Seeing through the window that he was approaching their home, she cast aside the handiwork on which she had been working and, rising forthwith, shut the door fast and said: "Depart from me, thou apostate who hast deceived thy Lord! I cannot hold converse with one who hath rejected God, and I shall not listen to thy false words! O godless and most wretched of men! Who impelled thee to undertake a task which thou couldst not carry through to the end? Who hath separated thee from the saints? Who hath enticed thee to withdraw from their fellowship? What hath put thee to flight even before issuing forth to battle? Thou hast not even seen the enemy, yet hast already cast down thy sword; his bolt hath not even been loosed at thee, and thou art already wounded! I was amazed, thinking that perhaps something good might come from a godless generation and an impious city! Could it be that a pure offering might be made to God by an offspring of the tyrant? Can incense be sweet-smelling to the Most High if offered by those who are guilty of innocent blood? What shall I do, wretch that I am, who have bound myself in wedlock to this impious man? I have not been accounted worthy to be called the wife of a martyr; nay, on the contrary, I have become the wife of an apostate. Shortlived hath been my joy; it hath become everlasting mockery. For a short time I was praised among women, but now I shall have to endure unceasing scorn from them!"

The blessed Adrian, standing at the door and hearing Natalia speak thus, rejoiced at heart and was strengthened further for his contest, aflame all the more with a desire to fulfil what he had promised to Christ God. He marvelled that his young wife, who had but lately married him, would speak thus, for they had been wed but thirteen months. Seeing his wife's great grief, Adrian knocked at the door, pleading with her: "Open thou the door unto me, O my lady Natalia! I have not fled from torment, as thou thinkest; nay, I could not act thus. I have come to take thee with me, as I promised, that thou mightest behold our end." But Natalia refused to believe his words, and continued to reproach him: "Behold, how this transgressor would deceive me! Behold how this second Judas lieth unto me! Depart from me, lest I slay thee!" And she would not unlock the door. "Unlock the door and make haste to open unto me," pleaded Adrian, "for if I depart without seeing thee, thou shalt grieve over it, for I must very soon return. The holy martyrs have vouched for me, and if I do not return at the appointed hour, the warders will inquire after me, and if I am not there

the holy martyrs will have to bear my torments as well as their own. Will they be able to endure tortures for me when they themselves are barely alive?" Hearing this, Natalia straightway joyfully threw wide the door, and they flew into each other's embrace.

"Blessed art thou, O my spouse," said Adrian. "Thou alone camest to know God, that thy husband might be saved. Truly, O my wife, thou lovest thy husband! Blessedness shall be thy crown therefore, for although thou thyself dost not endure torment, yet thou dost participate in the sufferings of the martyrs in thy sympathy for them."

And taking his wife by the hand, Adrian departed thence with her. On the way he asked her: "How shall we dispose of our property?" Natalia answered: "Set aside all care for that which is of this earth, O my lord, lest it lead thy mind astray. Concern thyself and be mindful solely of winning the contest to which thou hast been called. Forget all that is of this earth, corruptible and harmful to the soul, the better to care about beholding and receiving the everlasting blessings prepared for thee and those saints with whom thou shalt walk the path of the Lord."

And, entering the prison, the handmaid of God Natalia fell down before the holy martyrs and, kissing their shackles, perceived that their wounds had festered and that maggots were falling therefrom, and that due to the iron chains wherewith they were bound, their bodily members were parting one from another. Then forthwith she dispatched her serving-maids to her home to fetch fine linen and bandages. When all had been brought, Natalia bound up the wounds of the martyrs with her own hands and, as far as was possible, alleviated their unbearable sufferings, ministering in the prison seven days, until they departed for trial.

When the day appointed for the trial dawned, the emperor Maximian took his place at the tribunal and commanded that the prisoners be brought to him. His servants went immediately to the prison to inform them of the emperor's command. Seeing that they were so afflicted of body, due to their grievous wounds, that they could not walk, the servants bound all the martyrs together in a line with a single chain, like a herd of cattle. But they led Adrian behind them all, binding his hands behind his back.

When they reached the judgement hall, the emperor was informed that the prisoners had been brought in. "Bring them all in together," the emperor commanded, "that they might behold each other's torment; bring them forth stripped naked, ready for torture." But the warden of the prison told the emperor: "O emperor, those who were tortured before cannot be brought hither for testing. Give the command that Adrian alone be brought forth, for he is yet strong and healthy of body, and can endure the various torments. But the bodies of the others have festered; one can see their bones

through their wounds, and if one beginneth to torture them afresh, they will die forthwith, without enduring the many tortures prepared for them. We do not wish them to die after a brief session of torment, like those whose guilt is negligible; therefore, give them a space of time to recover their health and grow strong, that they might later bear greater torments for their iniquity."

Then the emperor commanded that Adrian be brought forth alone. Stripping Adrian of his vesture, the servants handed him the instruments of torture, that he might hold them in his own hands. And the holy martyrs said to him: "Blessed art thou, O Adrian, that thou hast been freed to bear thy cross and follow Christ! Beware, and fear not! Turn not back and do not lose thy reward. Take care, lest the devil steal thy treasure. Be not afraid of visible torments, but direct thy gaze towards the reward which is to come. Go forth boldly and put the tyrant to shame! Know that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us' (Rom 8:18). which we hope to receive in accordance with God's mercy."

And the blessed Natalia also said to him: "Direct thy mind, my lord, to the one God alone, and may thy heart fear nought! The labor is short, but the rest is unending; the suffering is brief, but the glory of martyrdom is everlasting. Endure the pain but for a little time, and thou shalt shortly rejoice with the angels. If, serving an earthly ruler, thou didst take care to gather in the least tribute, and thou didst not spare thy health and wast ready to die in battle, then shouldst thou not now endure all manner of torments with yet greater valor, and die for the King of Heaven, with whom thou shalt thyself reign?"

When they brought Adrian before the impious Emperor Maximian, casting his gaze upon him he asked: "Dost thou still remain in thy foolishness and desire to end thy life?" "I have told thee before," replied the holy martyr Adrian, "that I have not lost my reason, but have regained it and am prepared to die in this life." The emperor asked: "Wilt thou not offer sacrifice and worship the gods, as I and all with me worship them and offer up sacrifice to them?" "Thou fool," answered Adrian, "if thou art in error, wherefore wouldst thou also lead others into the same error? Thou wouldst not only bring destruction upon thyself, but upon the whole nation which obeyeth thee; thou shalt ruin it utterly, advising and forcing men to worship inanimate graven images, forsaking the true God, the Creator of heaven and earth!" "Dost thou thus consider our great gods feeble?" asked the emperor. "I call them neither feeble nor strong," replied Adrian, "for they are nought."

Enraged, the tyrant then commanded that he be beaten with rods. The blessed Natalia, hearing that her husband's beating was beginning, informed the holy martyrs thereof, saying: "My lord hath begun to suffer!" And the saints straightway began to entreat God on his behalf, that He might strengthen him amid his torments. The emperor commanded the torturers to declaim: "Blaspheme not the gods!" And while they were beating the martyr, he said to the emperor: "If I am suffering because I blaspheme gods who are not gods, what torment awaiteth thee for blaspheming the true and living God?" "Apparently, thou hast learned to speak so boldly from those liars," said the emperor. The martyr said: "Why dost thou call liars them that are guides to salvation, who lead us to everlasting life? Ye are yourselves great charlatans, for ye lead the people to damnation!"

Filled with wrath, Maximian commanded four mighty torturers to beat the martyr savagely with heavy clubs. And while they were beating Adrian, he said: "The greater the torments thou devisest for me, O tyrant, the greater the crowns I shall win for them!" And the blessed Natalia conveyed to the holy martyrs all that passed between the emperor and Adrian.

"Take pity on thy youth," the tyrant continued to exhort the tortured man, "and call upon the gods! Wilt thou perish in vain, and of thine own will? My gods are great, and I sympathize greatly with thee, seeing how grievously thou art suffering, and how thy comeliness is being destroyed." "I am sparing myself," replied the martyr, "lest I perish utterly." "Call upon the gods," the tyrant pleaded; "they will have mercy on thee, and I will restore thee to thy former rank. Thou shouldst not be compared with those who were with thee in bondage, for thou art a noble personage, the son of renowned parents; and, though young, art yet worthy of great honors. But those prisoners are paupers, of mean lineage, and stupid ignoramuses." "I know that my lineage and generation are well known to thee," answered the martyr, "but if thou wert aware of the generation of those holy men, and the rich rewards which await them, thou woudst be one of the first to fall at their feet and ask them to pray for thee, and thou woudst with thine own hands destroy thine own inanimate gods!"

Angered all the more, the tyrant commanded four strong servants to beat the martyr's belly. And they beat the saint until his stomach burst and his entrails began to fall out. Seeing this, the tyrant commanded them to stop beating him. The blessed Adrian was a young man and lean of body, being only twenty-eight years of age. "Dost thou see how I am sparing thee?" the emperor said to him. "Thou hast but to utter a single word invoking the gods, and straightway they will be merciful to thee; and I shall summon physicians to treat thy wounds; and this day thou shalt be with me in my imperial palace!" But the martyr responded: "If thou dost promise me the

care of physicians, and that I will dwell in thy palace, and if thou sayest that thy gods will be merciful to me, then let them tell me with their own mouths what they wish to give me; let them say what benefactions they are promising me! And when I hear their words, I will offer them sacrifice and worship them as thou dost desire." "But they cannot speak," replied the emperor. "If they cannot speak," said the martyr, "then why dost thou worship them, dumb and inanimate as they are?"

In rage and ire, the tyrant commanded that Adrian be again chained to the other prisoners and locked in the dungeon, appointing the day when they would all be brought to trial. Then the soldiers, laying hold of the holy martyrs, dragged some forth; others, who were debilitated by their bodily sufferings, and unable to walk, they carried. The holy Adrian they led; and all were again incarcerated in the prison.

The blessed Natalia encouraged and comforted him. Embracing him, she said: "Blessed art thou, my lord, that thou wast vouchsafed the lot of the holy martyrs! Blessed art thou, light of mine eyes, for thou art suffering for Him that suffered for thee! Behold, now thou art going to see His glory and become a partaker thereof, for he that shareth His sufferings will be a partaker of His glory!"

During this conversation, Natalia soaked his blood up in a cloth and anointed her body therewith. And the holy martyrs rejoiced greatly at the valorous endurance of Adrian and, drawing nigh to him, they kissed him saying: "Peace be to thee, brother!" And those who could not walk because of the severity of their wounds lay on the floor and crawled to him, so as to kiss him; and all told him: "Rejoice in the Lord, beloved brother, for thy name hath been entered among those of the glorious servants of God!"

"Rejoice ye also, servants of Christ," responded Adrian, "for ye shall receive crowns for your care of me! Wherefore, pray ye unto the Lord for me, that He strengthen me, who am sore distressed of body; that the devil, who riseth up as mine enemy, may accomplish nought against me."

"Trust in the Lord," said the saints; "Satan will not overcome thee. Thou hast driven him far away by thy sufferings. At first we feared for thee, thinking that thou, as a man, wouldst weaken; but now, seeing thy steadfast endurance, we no longer have doubts concerning thee, and we believe that with the help of God the enemy will be able to do nought with thee. Wherefore, fear not: Christ, the Vanquisher of the devil, is with thee!"

With the holy Natalia, there were also other pious women who ministered to the saints, applying healing salves to their wounds and fashioning bandages for them, having apportioned the martyrs among themselves, that each might minister to her own, tending him with all possible care.

Learning that many women were coming to the prison and ministering to the prisoners, applying salves to their wounds, the impious emperor forbade them entry thereto. Seeing that the women could no longer go to the martyrs, the holy Natalia sheared the hair from her head, dressed in men's garments and, entering the prison in the guise of a man, herself ministered not only to her own husband, but to all the other holy martyrs.

Binding up the wounds of the martyrs, she sat at Adrian's feet and said: "I pray thee, my lord, be mindful of our union, and my presence by thy side during thy suffering, and my desire that thou shouldst win crowns. Pray to the Lord Christ our God, that He take me with thee, that as we lived together in this sorry life which is full of sins, so may we also live together inseparably in that blessed life. I pray thee, my lord: when thou standest before Christ the Lord, make supplication to Him first concerning me; for I believe that whatsoever thou askest, the Lord shall give thee, for thy prayer pleaseth Him, as doth thine entreaty. But thou knowest the impiety of this people and the godlessness of the emperor, and I fear that they will force me to marry another, an impious man and a pagan. Then would my bed be defiled and our union broken. I beseech thee, preserve thy spouse, as the Apostle teacheth; grant as a reward for chastity that I might die with thee!"

Having said this, she rose and again ministered unto the saints, giving them food and drink, and washing and binding up their wounds. The pious women, learning that Natalia was ministering unto the saints in male apparel, likewise sheared the hair from their heads, following her example, and, dressed in men's garb, entered the prison as before and ministered to the saints.

But when it became known to the emperor what the women had done, and also that the prisoners had weakened greatly as a result of their infected wounds and were barely alive, he commanded that there be brought to him at the prison an anvil and an iron hammer, that he might break the shins and arms of the martyrs, saying the while: "Let them not die the violent death usual for such men!" And when the torturers and executioners came to the prison with the iron hammer and anvil, Natalia, seeing this and discovering the reason for their arrival, greeted the servants with the entreaty that they begin with Adrian, since she feared that her husband, seeing the cruel torture and death of the other martyrs, would become afraid.

The torturers assented to Natalia's request and went first to Adrian. Then Natalia, lifting up her husband's legs, placed them on the anvil; with a mighty stroke, the torturers shattered the martyr's shins and smote off his legs. "I beseech thee, my lord, thou servant of Christ," said Natalia, "while thou art yet alive, stretch forth thine arm that they might break

it, and thou shalt then be equal with the other martyrs who have suffered more than thee!" The holy Adrian stretched forth his arm to her, and she, taking it, set it upon the anvil. The torturer, striking the arm mightily, broke it off, and straightway the holy Adrian surrendered his soul into the hands of God, unable to endure further torment.

Having slain the holy Adrian, the torturers went with anvil and hammer to the other martyrs, but they themselves placed their arms and legs on the anvil and said: "O Lord, receive Thou our souls!"

Thereafter, the impious emperor commanded that the bodies of the martyrs be burned, that the Christians might not take them up. But hearing of the emperor's command, the blessed Natalia secretly took her husband's arm and hid it on her person, so that it would not be burned.

When the servants of the tyrant kindled a fire and bore the bodies of the holy martyrs out from the prison to be burned, the holy Natalia and the other pious women followed after them and gathered up the martyrs' blood in their costly garments and in bands of cloth. Thus preserving it, they anointed their own bodies therewith. Moreover, the women purchased from the servants the martyrs' garments, which had been dyed with their blood. When the bodies of the saints were cast into the conflagration, the women cried out with tears: "Remember us, O our masters, in your everlasting repose!" But the holy Natalia drew nigh even unto the fire, to cast herself thereon, desiring to offer herself up with her husband as a sacrifice unto God, but she was restrained.

Suddenly a tremendous clap of thunder was heard, lightning flashed, and a heavy rain began to descend, which flooded the whole site with water and extinguished the fire itself. Seized with fear, the impious torturers took to flight, and many of them fell dead on the road, struck down by the lightning.

When the servants of the tyrant had been scattered, those faithful men who were with the holy Natalia and the other women extracted the bodies of the holy martyrs whole from the ashes; they had not been harmed in the least by the flames, and even their hair was unsinged.

A certain pious man and his wife, falling down before Natalia, began to entreat her and the rest of the brethren, saying: "We live on the outskirts of the city in a solitary place; we loathe godlessness, and can no longer bear to look upon the cruel bloodbath brought about by the impious emperor; wherefore, we no longer desire to remain in this place and are moving to Byzantium. Give us the bodies of the holy martyrs, and we will take them aboard a ship, conveying them with us far from here; and there we will preserve them until the death of the impious Emperor Maximian. After his death, if we still be alive, we shall return and bring hither the bodies of

the saints, that they may be honored by all. For if they remain here now, the emperor will order them burned, and ye will be forced to betray the bodies which God hath preserved from the conflagration by this rain." All agreed, and the bodies of the martyrs were taken aboard a ship, to be conveyed to Byzantium; and the winds favored the departure of the vessel.

Meanwhile, the holy Natalia dwelt in her home, treasuring the arm of her husband, the holy Adrian, which she, having anointed it with costly myrrh and wrapped it in a purple cloth, had placed in the head of her bed, a fact which none of her household knew.

When some time had passed, a certain prominent man, the commander of a thousand soldiers, desired to wed Natalia, for she was young, beautiful, and rich. He petitioned the emperor to permit him to take as his bride the spouse of Adrian, and the emperor consented to this marriage. The bridegroom straightway sent eminent laides to Natalia with the offer of his hand, but Natalia told them: "I am happy that such a man would have me to wed; but I ask you to wait for three days, that I might prepare myself, since I have not expected that anyone would wish to enter into marriage with me so soon." Thus saying, the blessed Natalia made her plans to flee to that place where the bodies of the martyrs had been taken.

Having sent the women back to the commander and reassured them, she herself, entering into her sleeping-chamber where the arm of St. Adrian was kept, fell to the ground and cried out to the Lord with weeping: "O Lord our God, God of the sorrowful and contrite of heart: look down upon me Thine handmaiden, and do not permit the bed of Thy martyr Adrian to be defiled. Forget not, O Master, the sufferings of Thy servant, which he endured for the sake of Thy name! O merciful Lord, remember the breaking of the shins and the striking off of the arms of him and Thine other servants, which they endured for Thy sake, and let not their sufferings be in vain. For their sake, take pity on me, and permit me not to remain living with Thine enemies. O Thou Who didst deliver those saints from the fire, deliver me also from the intentions of this vile man!" And while she was praying thus, from exhaustion and from grief Natalia began to nod and fell into a light sleep; and lo! one of the holy martyrs appeared to her in a dream and said: "Peace be to thee, O Natalia, handmaiden of Christ!" "Know thou that God hast not disdained thee, and we also have not forgotten the labors which thou didst show forth in nursing us during our imprisonment; standing in the presence of Christ, we are beseeching Him that He command thee right quickly to come to us." The blessed Natalia asked him: "Tell me, holy martyr, whether my lord Adrian standeth with thee before the Lord Christ." And the martyr replied: "He took his place before the Master even before we did! But do thou make haste to take ship with-

out delay, and sail whither our bodies are. There the Lord will appear to thee, and He will lead thee to us!"

Awakening from sleep, the holy Natalia straightway left all behind and, taking only the arm of the holy Adrian, departed from her home. Arriving at the shore of the sea, she beheld a ship which almost seemed to be awaiting her, which was due to set sail for Byzantium. And, boarding it, she saw thereon people of both sexes, and all the Christians fleeing from the persecutions of the impious Emperor Maximian; and she gave thanks to God.

But the commander, learning of Natalia's flight, asked the emperor for the aid of some soldiers. Boarding another ship, he set out in pursuit. But when his ship had sailed but a thousand stadia from the shore, the sea was smitten with a contrary wind which drove the ship back to the shore, to the place whence it had sailed; and it sustained much damage, so that many of those on board drowned. But the ship of the Christians, whereon was St. Natalia, sailed on without any mishap. At midnight the devil appeared to the Christians of Natalia's ship. He took the form of one sailing on a ship out of the east, having with himself some others in the guise of sailors. And the devil asked the Christian sailors, calling to them as would a helmsman: "Whence hail ye, and whither are ye bound?" And the Christians answered: "We are from Nicomedia, bound for Byzantium!" And the enemy said to them: "Ye have wandered off course; alter your course to port!" Thus saying, the devil wished to deceive them and bring about their destruction. And the Christians, believing this lying counsel and believing that those whom they had encountered were really sailing out of the east, began to turn sail and ship to port; but suddenly the holy martyr Adrian appeared to them, radiant with light, and he cried out with a loud voice: "Sail by the course ye were following before, and hearken not to the words of the enemy who doubtless is preparing destruction for you!" Thus saying, the martyr appeared to go before them across the water, and the devil vanished with his ship.

The blessed Natalia, having risen up, beheld the holy Adrian going before her ship, and she cried aloud: "Behold my lord!" And straightway the saint became invisible.

A favorable wind blew, and the voyagers arrived in Byzantium by sunset and anchored offshore, close to the site of the church in which the bodies of the holy martyrs had been interred; and the passengers disembarked with joy. Approaching the bodies of the martyrs in the church, St. Natalia fell down before them with ineffable gladness, kissing them and shedding tears of joy; and laying the arm of St. Adrian next to his body, she knelt down and prayed at length. Then, when she had finished, she rose up and

greeted the brethren and sisters who were there, for many faithful Christians were assembled in that place. They received her with joy, took her into their homes, and besought her to rest herself somewhat, for they saw that she was very weary from the long sea voyage. And while she slept soundly, the holy Adrian appeared to her in a dream and told her: "It is well that thou hast come hither, O handmaid of Christ and daughter of the martyrs. Come thou to the rest prepared for thee by the Lord. Come and receive thy due reward!"

Awakening, the holy Natalia related her dream to the Christians there and asked them to pray for her. Thereafter, she fell asleep again. In an hour's time, the faithful came to rouse her, but they found that she had reposed, for her holy soul had departed to everlasting rest with the Lord. Thus, soon after the sufferings of the holy martyrs, the holy Natalia also completed the course of her sufferings, even though without shedding her blood. Much had she suffered with the martyrs, ministering to them in prison and watching their torture, and for chastity's sake, she also forsook home and native land; and she stands even now amid the choir of the martyrs before Christ our Saviour, to Whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

[Translated by the staff of ORTHODOX LIFE from "The Lives of the Saints in the Russian Language, as set forth in the Menology of St. Dmitri of Rostov" (Moscow: Synodal Press, 1911); August Vol., pp. 441-462]



ORTHODOXY OR ... ?

It is note the general policy of LIVING ORTHODOXY to comment on events in parishes outside the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. However, a recent sequence of happenings affecting the claim to its title in a parish of the "Orthodox Church in America" demands some notice...primarily, that it may be brought to the attention of those within that jurisdiction who may be unaware of the form of 'orthodoxy' toward which it seems to be growing.

Item: the priest who was recently sent to serve one of the "OCA" parishes in the south is a Roman Catholic priest who was made 'orthodox' simply by 'vesting': his Roman Catholic baptism, confirmation, and ordination were supposedly converted to Orthodox mysteries by the mere act of placing upon him Russian vestments. While there is, to be sure, an unfortunate precedent for such action in the past history of the Orthodox Church, the practice is at best highly questionable.

Item: this same priest subsequently received into 'orthodoxy' his parents from the Roman Catholic Church, using the Rite for the Reception of Converts. Again, a questionable practice, at best, given the manifest and ever-growing turn of Rome toward blatant apostasy. But that is not all: from the Rite were omitted the renunciations of the heresies of Rome---in effect, a declaration that Rome is not in heresy, and an affirmation of the recent declaration of an 'orthodox' hierarch that 'we (Romans and Orthodox) are the same'.

Item: in this same parish, it was deemed necessary to insert into the minutes of the mission committee the observation that a certain family which had long since left the mission in favor of true Orthodoxy was 'not happy according to calls (the priest) has received' and the admonition that 'members of our parish should not pray with them in their home because they have established themselves as the only Orthodox group in town.' Curious, at best, as the family in question has in fact sought out true Orthodoxy and undertaken to prepare the way for the regular keeping of an Orthodox liturgical life in the city in question, in collaboration with others who have the same concern.

None of this would be worthy of comment, perhaps, were it simply a matter of local aberrations, which one could hope would in time be corrected by the appropriate authorities---or if it made no claim to pre-

sent to the people of a mission territory a picture of Holy Orthodoxy. But in fact, the 'priesting' in question occurred at the principal seminary of the "OCA", and to the best of our knowledge no protest or corrective action has been taken with regard to the de facto declaration of the substantial identity of 'orthodoxy' and Roman Catholicism ---in defiance of untold Councils of the Church. It can only be assumed that such events, if not already the norm, are the sign of things to come in the "OCA".

The only worthy purpose to be served by this sad commentary is for it to alert others of the necessity of seeking out and finding their place under the fatherly care of true Orthodox bishops...distinguishing between them and the ever-growing company of false shepherds who, while pretending to be Orthodox, in fact lead their flocks to the precipices of ecumenism, communion with falsehood, and modernism. May those who have ears hear and take action.

LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

(Enclosed a check) to renew my subscription to LIVING ORTHODOXY, a magazine which I find very helpful in my isolation. My parish is 1200 miles away, in London, England. I observed in an issue last spring that you need donors for LIVING ORTHODOXY to be sent behind the Iron Curtain. I therefore enclose my check... (for a subscription)...for a brother or sister in the Soviet. If you could let me know the Christian name of the Orthodox in the Soviet who is to receive this gift so that I could pray for him or her by name I would be most grateful. I feel a special affinity with our people there since we are neighbors, so to speak. I belong to the Parish of St. Gregory in London but live here in exile. [...] May God bless you and keep you. In Christo,

Theodosia Gray
Uppsala, Sweden

Dear Fr. Gregory and Matushka Anastasia:

Loved the recent issue of LIVING ORTHODOXY. Concerning the symbolism

give
year ago I visited [...]. [...].
that [...]. I often pointed out under the cross represents the skull
of Adam. Christ was crucified where Adam and Eve were buried--there
was a great earthquake, the ground opened up, and Our Lord's Blood ac-
tually drenched the skulls of Adam and Eve---showing redemption. If
one goes to the Holy Land today, one can go underground and see the
place where this event took place.

Maria Russell
Seattle, WA

Dear Fr. Gregory:

[...] With special interest I read "The Sacramental Life". Top book
on such a difficult aspect of the Church. Small points needing clear-
ing up for the benefit of readers: p. 72...'even in some sense of be-
coming God': it may not make a strong enough distinction of Essence &
Energies of God, or maybe I didn't follow it properly; p. 29...the
'rock' in the verse quoted has been interpreted by the Fathers of the
Church as the Faith which St. Peter expressed. Perhaps good to quote
Bible verses in next edition instead of contents of brackets. Overall
a top cheap book. [...] Yours in Christ,

Kyriakos
Bondi Beach, Australia

Dear Fr. Gregory,

I've been meaning for a long time to write to thank you for being so
kind as to send LIVING ORTHODOXY to me here at Lesna. I'm not the on-
ly American, and we also have an English nun, and several Russians who
speak English, so everything gets passed around and LIVING ORTHODOXY
enjoys a wide circulation. We were especially interested to learn a-
bout the New-Martyrs of Alaska, and the Russian 'cradle Orthodox' a-
mongst us learned a lot from the "Letters from a Convert". Having
little idea of what an individual goes through in becoming Orthodox,
they helped us to better understand the converts in our convent. When
they are printed as a booklet, I'd very much like a copy.

With love in Christ,
An unworthy novice,
Elizabeth
Lesna Convent, France

HOGAR DE NIÑAS

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction....."

(James 1:27)

An important Orthodox mission is found in the countryside outside Santiago, Chile. A small convent of three nuns and several young novices maintains a home for orphan girls, known as the Hogar de Niñas de San Juan de Kronstadt. There are a dozen or so buildings of simple construction, which include a dormitory for the girls, quarters for the nuns, a chapel, a school building, kitchen and dining rooms, etc. The site is in a country setting with a view of green mountains around it.

This convent, dedicated to the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, had its beginning in the Holy Land by a Russian woman, the Rev. Abbess Alexia, and her niece, M. Xenia, who gathered sisters around them to live together in service to God. The sisters suffered many hardships and trials due to poverty, war, and, later, harassment after the establishment of the State of Israel in 1947. With God's help they remained steadfast in their love for God and the monastic life.

In June 1958 the convent left the Holy Land and, in time, arrived in Chile to begin a mission for Orthodox Christianity in a country predominantly Roman Catholic. The orphanage, established in 1967, grew from poor and humble beginnings, taking in homeless and needy girls as God would send. Several of the original sisters of the convent have since reposed; the founding Abbess, M. Alexia, reposed in July 1967. The Rev. M. Julianna is the present Abbess, and M. Xenia (now in her 90's) and M. Johanna are all that is left of the convent. The mission is in need of workers and women to join the sisterhood. A call is out for women who desire to lead a monastic life as well as to labor in the harvesting of these young souls. A parish priest, Fr. Benjamin, sometimes serves at the chapel on the convent grounds, and also in a nearby neighborhood church.

The orphanage consists of girls brought from broken homes and poor relatives, and works with the National Council of Minors, which finds orphan girls and sends them to the home. The majority of the girls are baptized Orthodox; newcomers receive instruction before Baptism. Today there are forty-two girls ranging in age from three to eighteen.

The labor of raising 42 homeless girls with the many and urgent needs of children of various ages---from clothing them to teaching proper behavior, to meeting emotional needs, to religious upbringing, etc.---is a tremendous one, especially for so small a convent. Thus, the earnest call for serious women to join them in their struggles.

In addition to this great task of raising children, in 1959 the convent also established a co-educational elementary school for neighboring children, situated on the convent land. There are 245 students (including the school-age orphans) with eight grades. Teachers are hired from the lay community. This school is a vital mission---not only is it the only school in the area, but it also serves as an effective outreach for Orthodox Christianity. [Word has reached LIVING ORTHODOXY that even Roman Catholic families in the area, desiring a sound religious instruction for their children, have asked the convent to provide catechetical studies for them.]

In recent years there has occurred an extremely difficult financial crisis for the school. Because of lack of funds the school was threatened with being closed down. The situation became desperate but, with God's help, some financial help was secured from the Chilean government to help pay the teachers.

The monthly expense of running the orphanage and school is very high. Besides food, clothing, medical care and education of 42 girls, the convent cares for a few elderly lay-women. The convent owns a few farm animals (2 cows and 2 pigs) and a variety of fruit trees. As a supplement to their small funds cookies, jams, and embroidered items are sold. The girls are trained in these skills. But these efforts can only offer small help to their financial need. A recent visitor reported that the buildings are clean, but poor and in obvious need of repair. A plan to bake and sell bread is unable to develop fully for lack of money to build a suitable bakery which could provide a substantial income as well as food and a trade for the girls. The hope is that the bakery would allow the convent and orphanage to become more independent financially. The living standard is simple and plain, yet because of so many basic living expenses there is always need of financial assistance, in spite of additional, but not sufficient, aid received from Chilean charitable organisations and the alms of Orthodox brethren. Out of love for God, through almsgiving and as a witness for Orthodoxy, let each one give from his heart, and pray for our mis-

sion in Chile.

[This article has previously appeared in ORTHODOX AMERICA in this country and in THE SHEPHERD in England; we repeat it here in the hope that it will reach additional brethren, who may give of their prayers and resources...and possibly their lives...and perhaps remind even those who have seen it before of the real need of our sisters and their helpless charges in Chile. Donations may be sent directly to The Convent of the Dormition; Cassilla 14493; Correo 21; Santiago, Chile; or (to minimize the costs of exchange) they may be sent to Agape Community for consolidation into a single check. As this issue should reach most of our readers shortly after the Feast of the Dormition, this is an especially appropriate time to remember the sisters and orphans.]

CONCERNING THE VENERATION OF THE MARTYR-KING EDWARD

On 9/22 July 1982, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia HEARD: the oral report of His Grace, Bishop Gregory, to the effect that, after the question was raised at the Council of Bishops concerning the verification of the correctness of the introduction of the name of the martyred King Edward (of England) into our list of saints, it has become clear that His Grace, Bishop Constantine, the president of the Commission, acknowledges the correctness of the decision; Bishop Mark, who at first had doubts, has agreed with the former decision after having been acquainted with the historical information compiled by His Grace, Bishop Gregory, who cited a list of names of Western saints of the same period who have long been included in our list of saints (among whom are St. Ludmilla, St. Wenceslaus of Czechia, and others). Mr. Palmer stated that, due to illness, he is unable to undertake the study of the question at hand.

RESOLVED: In view of the fact that none of the members of the Commission appointed by the Council has expressed himself against the veneration of King Edward as a martyr, the Synod of Bishops decides that the further study of the question of whether King Edward is a holy martyr is to cease, and the former decision concerning (permitting) his veneration is to remain in force.

[Extract from the Minutes of the Sessions of the Synod of Bishops, attested as to accuracy and promulgated by The Rt. Rev. Bishop Gregory, Secretary of the Synod.]

AGAPE COMMUNITY NOTES

Very brief this issue...space is limited! The summer has been good to us, and we continually rejoice in the Lord's bounty. We have been much blessed by His kindness and the generosity of His people, and must take the opportunity to express our thanksgiving for at least some of these blessings (we always fear to do this, for inevitably we fail to mention something which we ought to have!). An all too brief visit by Fr. Leonty from Holy Trinity Monastery, our Matthew's adoptive godfather and dear friend, was made possible by the visit of another friend, Fr. John Horne of St. Petersburg, who provided transportation down. This visit was capped by a mission trip to Birmingham, AL, for the celebration there with Fr. Leonty of the Akathist to St. John of Kronstadt during the week, followed on the weekend with the celebration of the Vigil and Divine Liturgy for Sunday. Further such visits are anticipated in the future, and anyone interested should make contact for information concerning the regular weekly readers' services now being held there and future priestly visits.

That trip was made possible both by the generosity of the faithful in Birmingham and by the kindness of the brethren of Holy Protection Monastery in Oklahoma City. The old Chevy II having definitively died, the brethren there kindly volunteered the gift of a 71 Olds station wagon---provided it could be made roadworthy. After several telephone conversations, Fr. Gregory donned a pack loaded with tools and took to the road, thumb up, at Nashville. First experience in hitchhiking in true clerical garb; conclusion: successful. The trip out took 3 hours longer than the drive back. The cassock proved to be neither an advantage nor a disadvantage, so far as the mechanics of the 'trade' were concerned, measured against past experience. But one significant difference was notable: nearly all the rides were with people anxious for one reason or another to talk with a priest (and this in 'Bible-belt' country!). The car was successfully started and driven back home --- but we now discover it has a burnt valve...a near-fatal disease for a car of its age and mileage. While it will serve for the time being (at the fearful gas consumption of 10mpg!), the search is still on for a suitable vehicle for use in the Community's work.

During the past weeks, we have also been blessed by the arrival of numerous icons for the Temple, some of them the result of the patient labors of our generous benefactor Luke Gehring of Minnesota, others of the kindness of two of the Church's monastic establishments. Suffering

...and I recently rereading her Life for
...and a paraklisis in her honor, we put out
...to find icons of her somewhere...and now have three! We also
...rejoice in icons of the martyr Pope St. Sixtus I of Rome (of
whom the Temple is possessed of a relic), of the Martyr St. Sebastian
(of whom we also have a relic), of St. Justin the Martyr and Philoso-
pher, of St. Juvenal and of St. Peter the Aleut, the first American
martyrs, and of St. Pantileimon; further, we have received a hand-done
epitaphion for the Dormition of the Mother of God...which now awaits
someone with the appropriate skills to prepare an embroidered cloth
upon which it can be mounted.

With fall looking at us around the corner, we are aware of how much we
had hoped to get done this summer...and how little of it is done! Des-
pite the improbability of it, we still hope that it may be possible
to spend some time this fall in 'Orthodox contry' in the northeast,
visiting with our brethren in the monasteries and parishes there—for
this is important to our own spiritual well-being; and so are aware of
how little time is left. But we still have hopes of entering the win-
ter with a much better house than before, and perhaps even yet of get-
ting some work done on the spring (which badly needs to be excavated
and enclosed) before being tied down to firewood-cutting and the task
of keeping warm. We also approach the winter with some changes in the
livestock situation. After carefully analyzing the matter of chickens,
we have come to the conclusion that for us, at least, they are a luxu-
ry we would be better off without. Given the long spaces of time dur-
ing which the eggs cannot be used because of the fasts, the impossi-
bility of marketing the surpluses during those times because of our
location, and the cost of feed...eggs wind up costing us about \$2/doz.
So we are trying to make arrangements to pass the chickens on and pro-
cure a source of farm-fed eggs during the times we need them...we are
spoiled on 'real' eggs and could not easily adapt to the egg-factory
variety! We also enter the fall with a new-born: our pony Molly gave
birth to a beautiful Appaloosa-marked foal (mostly horse and only $\frac{1}{4}$
pony) several weeks ago, and 'Milly' (a filly out of Molly!) is doing
well and promises to grow into a fine mare—for breeding, riding and
working. For all these and His many other blessings, Glory be to God!

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FROM THE FATHERS

From the "Martyrdom of SS. Perpetua and Felicity at Carthage", AD 203:
"A few days after, as we were all praying, suddenly in the midst of prayer a voice burst from me, and I named Dinocrates: and I marvelled that he had never come into my mind till then, and I grieved when I remembered what had befallen him: and I felt at once that I was in a position to pray for him, and ought to do so. And I began to pray much for him and to make moaning to the Lord. Straightway that same night it was shown to me on this wise: I saw Dinocrates coming out of a gloomy place, where there were many others besides, exceedingly hot and thirsty, with his countenance dirty and wan in color, and the wound in his face which he had when he died. This Dinocrates had been my brother in the flesh, of seven years old, who had been ill and died a bad death with cancer in the face, so that his death was a horror to everyone. [The reason for which Perpetua had not previously prayed for her brother was, no doubt, that he had died unbaptized.] For him then I prayed: and between him and me there was a great gulf fixed, so that neither of us could go to the other. Next, in the place where Dinocrates was, there was a basin full of water, with the brink too high for the boy's stature, and Dinocrates was stretching himself up as if to drink. I was sad that the basin should hold water, and yet he should be unable to drink because of the height of the brink of it. And I awoke, and understood that my brother was in trouble. But I was confident that I should be able to help his trouble, and I prayed for him every day until we went across to the prison at the barracks. It was then the birthday of the Caesar Geta: and I prayed for my brother every day and night, groaning and weeping that he should be given me. On the day when we remained in the stocks, it was shown to me on this wise. I saw the place which I had seen before, and Dinocrates with his body cleansed, and well-clad, taking his refreshment. And where the wound was, I saw the flesh closed up: and the basin which I had seen before, I now saw with the lip lowered to the boy's waist; and the water ran over from it without ceasing; and on the brink was a golden stoup full of water; and Dinocrates went up and began to drink from it, and that stoup failed not to be full. And when he had had enough, he went away to play after the manner of children, rejoicing. And I awoke. Then I understood that he was removed from his suffering."